

5324

To whom it may concern,

As the owner of two (soon to be three) Urgent Care centers in Connecticut, I would like to voice my grave concerns regarding the upcoming House Bill 5324.

Over the past two years, my business partner and I have invested over \$2 million and created 53 much needed jobs in Connecticut. We have opened our centers in areas that were underserved and in need of other alternatives for accessing the healthcare system besides waiting 2-5 hours in an emergency room at their nearest hospital. We have currently seen over 30,000 patients and have provided quality and compassionate care for a fraction of the cost of an emergency room. In doing this, we have saved Connecticut residents, Connecticut Industry, Connecticut based Insurance companies and the state of Connecticut millions of dollars (we are one of the few that accept Medicaid). To do this, we built state of the art centers that are beautiful to the eye and warm for the soul, where patients are treated with the utmost respect from the minute they walk in and are greeted with a smile and a "hello, welcome to Doctors Express".

Meeting the financial responsibilities of running urgent care centers is no easy task, these are not yogurt shops. From investing in state-of-the-art medical equipment to paying our employees competitive wages (and benefits) and building beautiful and warm centers, this is quite the investment. With this being said, it is of great concern that the legislature in Connecticut is considering passing HB 5324, which would force urgent care centers to provide "charity care". If this were to pass, it would have a great impact on our already slim profit margins and really force us to reconsider our expansion plans within the state. We do not have endless amounts of capital and for us to be able to provide the service we do, it is very important for us to be paid for our services. Because of our slim profit margins, any unpaid visits have a huge impact on our cash flow. If we are forced to provide "charity care", it would not take many visits to force us to close our doors, meaning that my business partner and I would lose out on over \$2 million dollars that we invested and 53 people would be out of a job, not to mention the communities we serve would have to rely on the ER. This would in turn push up costs for the state of CT.

I must say before I close that, since we have opened, we have taken in and treated many patients who either cannot pay, or can pay very little. However, it only works if we can do this on OUR terms, not by being mandated by the state to do so. This is a fundamental difference, and as a private business built with our own money, I feel that this is a major infringement on our ability to conduct and maintain our business.

Sincerely,

Ronald Krippner
Owner/Treasurer
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